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THE USE OF SEWING SKILLS  
BY THE TEACHERS OF HOME ECONOMICS  
IN THE COLLEGES OF NORTH CAROLINA AND FLORIDA

by

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND FOR THE PROBLEM

In the economy of the United States today the role of home sewing is an important concern. The interest in this field has increased over the last several years.

According to economic and social reports related to the trend of the times, this present day is the peak period in history for sewing. The present economy, the rising standards of living, the increased leisure, and the quantity and variety of attractive materials, fabrics, and findings, of the modern world have added impetus to the interest in home sewing. Dress and textile manufacturers are concerned as to the effect this increase in home sewing will have upon their industries.

Numerous articles reflecting the studies of nationally known economists, home economists, and government agencies have appeared in newspapers and magazines with increasing frequency. They pertain to the current popularity of home sewing and its importance to the consumer and the effect on the fashion industry.

In spite of the present popularity of sewing, its importance as a part of the program of Home Economics in the secondary schools and the colleges of the nation is being questioned. The colleges particularly are concerned about those parts of the curriculum dealing with the selection and construction of clothing. Since the problems in the selection and care of ready-to-wear have also increased, there has been difficulty in deciding the emphasis which should be placed on the



sewing skills as compared with that directed toward the selection and purchasing of apparel.

There are several informative research reports pertaining to home sewing. These reports give views of groups in regard to the importance of home sewing and the extent to which it is used. The groups vary in age, income level, social status, and extent of training. Little, however, has been reported for the highly trained and skilled in this type of work.

It was the purpose of this study to determine the nature and extent of the use made of sewing skills by a highly trained and professional group. The sample selected for this study was composed of the teachers of Home Economics in the white colleges of North Carolina and Florida. The information desired would indicate the nature and extent of their use of sewing skills as applied to apparel and home furnishings.

The literature and research reports pertaining to the importance of home sewing are reviewed in Chapter II. The method of procedure followed in obtaining the information is presented in Chapter III. The compilation of data is presented in detail in Chapter IV and summarized in Chapter V. Conclusions and implications for further study are also in Chapter V.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

According to the nationally syndicated financial columnist, Sylvia Porter, "our country is participating in a phenomenal renaissance of an industry, occupation and hobby." More than thirty-five million American women and girls, or two out of every three females over twelve in our land are now sewing.<sup>1</sup> The rise of this art is important to several groups: The consumer or individual; the manufacturers; and the Home Economists in the school programs at both the secondary and college level.

"The boom (in the field of home sewing) is erasing all income distinctions; what was an activity mostly of lower income groups in the thirties and early forties is increasingly an activity of higher income families." It includes all age levels and results in many changes in the tradition of a century. The number of home sewers has increased four times faster than our population in the last few years and the Department of Agriculture estimates that one-fifth of all women's garments worn in our country now are home sewn.<sup>2</sup>

Almost ninety percent of the women interviewed in a recent

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<sup>1</sup>Sylvia Porter, "Major Industry-Home Sewing Is Revived," The Greensboro [North Carolina] Daily News, September 25, 1958, p. B20.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

survey rated sewing as their Number one hobby, stressing the "creativity" of it. Strangely enough, families in the \$7,500-and-over income class have become the biggest single users of fashion patterns.<sup>3</sup>

"Women are still sewing to economize--but on the fanciest dresses that Paris can design." Inspired by fashion news, women are "sewing profits" for an industry that will "reap" close to one billion dollars this year. "Home sewers will spend \$400 million for fabrics, \$290 million for accessories, \$270 million for home sewing machines, \$40 million for 90 million patterns."<sup>4</sup>

Industry is reaping the profits from home sewing, but is also working to make the art easier and more attractive for the consumer. After World War I, and throughout the depression, sewing was a means of economizing.<sup>5</sup> After World War II the home sewing industry leveled off. The period of growth of the present time is a result of many factors: (1) the high cost of well-made and fashionable clothes encourages the money-conscious woman to try to make the "good" dress, or skirt, or jacket, herself; (2) the increased leisure time in middle and higher-income homes for pursuit of hobbies for "creativity"; (3) the fashion consciousness of the American woman

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>"Modern Living, Sew and Reap," Time, (November 10, 1958), p. 80.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.



and girl encourages her to want to sew; (4) the heavy promotion of home sewing by the manufacturer and the retail stores is also an important factor in the upsurge of the industry.<sup>6</sup>

One important factor that makes sewing more interesting than ever is the relative ease with which it may be done. Newer machines and attachments make it possible to use stitches and construction details which formerly required much time and hand skill. Then too, the vast number of aids and gadgets sold as sewing equipment have not failed to increase interest in sewing.

Who Is Sewing. "McCall's describes the woman who sews, . . . as 'a woman between 25 and 39 years of age, in middle class circumstances with a moderate income, married and not employed, caring for a family, which includes one or two children.'"<sup>7</sup>

Of those who sew: fifty-six percent are housewives; twelve percent are employed; nineteen percent are employed, and keep house; and thirteen percent are students. About two-thirds of the women who sew are between twenty and thirty-nine years of age with about twelve percent of the grand total made up of teen agers.<sup>8</sup>

Sewers are found everywhere, in large cities as well as on the

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<sup>6</sup>Porter, op. cit.

<sup>7</sup>Editors of American Fabrics Magazine, Home Sewing Report (New York: American Fabrics, 1958), p. 80.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

farm. Seventy percent of the women who sew live in cities having under one hundred thousand population.<sup>9</sup> The importance of sewing to women in rural areas may be indicated by a study of the home demonstration work in North Carolina which reported that seventy-eight percent of the club women questionned did some sewing.<sup>10</sup>

What Is Made. The United States Department of Agriculture found that, "More home sewers made new clothes for women--presumably themselves--and for children than for infants and men."<sup>11</sup> It is estimated that half of all sewing machine activity is employed in dressmaking. "Only 5 per cent of home sewing has to do with home furnishings." Out of twenty-one garments made during a year; fourteen are for misses or women; six for children; and one for men.<sup>12</sup>

According to the study made by United States Department of Agriculture:

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>10</sup>North Carolina Agricultural Extension Office, "Some Results and Interpretations of the Study of Home Demonstration Work in North Carolina" (Raleigh, North Carolina: Agricultural Extension Office, 1958), p. 14. (Mimeographed.)

<sup>11</sup>United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service, Marketing Research Division, Women's Attitudes Toward Wool and Other Fibers, Marketing Research Report No. 153: 1955. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1957), p. 42.

<sup>12</sup>Editors of American Fabrics Magazine, loc. cit.

The great majority of women who made new clothes . . . made women's dresses, and substantial proportions made skirts and blouses. Fewer made lingerie or suits or coats.<sup>13</sup>

Another estimate is that women sew an average of four to six garments a year.<sup>14</sup> The United States Department of Agriculture also found that "The average home sewer of new clothes made nine items in the year preceding the interview."<sup>15</sup> They classified sewers in the following groups:

. . . Women who made no more than 6 new garments in the past year were considered "less frequent sewers," those who made from 7 to 12 new garments were considered "moderate sewers," and those who made more than 12 "frequent sewers."<sup>16</sup>

Further information from the study made by the United States Department of Agriculture indicates that, "sewing is the most widely practiced needlework art, . . ."<sup>17</sup> Among the women interviewed --

46 percent used sewing machines for mending  
40 percent used them for making new clothes  
37 percent used them for altering clothes  
35 percent made household items on their machines<sup>18</sup>

The report of the North Carolina home demonstration workers indicates the types of home sewing done by the members.

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<sup>13</sup>United States Department of Agriculture, loc. cit.

<sup>14</sup>"Modern Living, Sew and Reap," loc. cit.

<sup>15</sup>United States Department of Agriculture, loc. cit.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>United States Department of Agriculture, op. cit., p. 39.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 41.



Dressmaking was most widely reported. More women made dresses for themselves or for their children than any other garment. More than a third made from 3 to 5 dresses. A fourth made over 5 dresses. Because of the interest in dressmaking, it seems that much help should be made available on the fine techniques of both sewing and fitting.

For girls . . . There were always more reporting making dresses in the "more than 5 dresses" category.

Sleeping garments were next most frequently reported, then girls' coats, men's shirts, women's suits, and women's coats.<sup>19</sup>

The editors of American Fabrics magazine report that of the 52 million women who sew "96% also buy ready-to-wear, purchasing lingerie, coats, suits, separates and dresses, in that order."<sup>20</sup>

Reasons for Sewing. The reports also indicate the reasons for sewing as expressed by the individuals questioned.

The editors of American Fabrics magazine compiled the following list of reasons which were given for home sewing:

|                       |                   |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Because I like to sew | 72%               |
| To save money         | 65%               |
| Be my own designer    | 33%               |
| Avoid alterations     | 15%               |
| Other                 | 12% <sup>21</sup> |

In the thesis by Luffman, the homemakers questioned gave reasons why they did, or did not, make their children's clothing:

. . . Some of their reasons for making them were the saving of money, the desire to sew, and to get a better fitting garment.

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<sup>19</sup>North Carolina Agricultural Extension Office, op. cit., p. 15.

<sup>20</sup>Editors of American Fabrics Magazine, op. cit., pp. 78, 84.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 81.

Some of their reasons for not making their children's clothing were the inability to sew, the dissatisfaction with fit or appearance of homemade garments, the saving of time, and the lack of a sewing machine.<sup>22</sup>

An article in the Woman's Home Companion gave the views of several women as to why it pays to sew. A young mother sewed to stretch the family budget. A teen-ager stated that she wanted to have more clothes. A career girl sewed because she was hard to please.<sup>23</sup>

Bernice Fitz-Givvon, a noted Home Economist in industry, believes fashion and quality are more important than price in the sewing and piece goods business. She says:

. . . Everybody loves a bargain; but the real terrific bargain is in the dress you have made with your own hands--not in the pennies per yard you have saved.

The same is true of fabrics. If one uses a top-notch tailor or dressmaker, the fabric and findings run to only about one-tenth of the total cost. The tailor or dressmaker gets the nine-tenths. Sewers are women of taste and means. They want high-fashion clothes at a fraction of their high-fashion ready-to-wear price.<sup>24</sup>

There are really many motives "which keep women working away at their sewing machines."<sup>25</sup> Miss Fitz-Gibbon states "the basic reason for the sewing renaissance is deep in the hearts of women."

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<sup>22</sup>Winnie Frances Luffman, "Opinions of Home Economics Graduates Concerning the Use and Value of Clothing and Textile Instruction at the Woman's College" (unpublished, Master's thesis, The Woman's College of the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, 1954), pp. 86.

<sup>23</sup>Elizabeth Madeira and Eleanor Merritt, "Three Reasons Why You'll Find It Pays To Sew," Woman's Home Companion, 82:108-118, September, 1955.

<sup>24</sup>"'Goof-Off and Togetherness' Cited to NRMA National Retail Merchants Association as Sales Factor," America's Textile Reporter, 73:14, March 5, 1959.

<sup>25</sup>Editors of American Fabrics Magazine, op. cit., p. 81.

. . . The anthropologists and psychologists and sociologists tell us that the need for creativity is an important factor . . . . Sewing's the last frontier of creative homemaking, an outlet for energy and a cause for pride, . . . . A woman who sews is not only a financial asset--she's a happier woman.<sup>26</sup>

The American Fabrics study also indicates that creativity is one of the basic reasons for sewing. Some people still believe that "the most important reason for making your own is financial," but many of the best informed people in the industry claim that "more women sew because they like to than because they need to."<sup>27</sup>

The editors go on to say that the question of sewing is not one of price but of self-expression. They report that millions of women sew: (1) "to express their individuality and sense of style;" (2) to fill the need to do something with their hands; and (3) to rebel against the "mechanization of modern life."<sup>28</sup>

In spite of the fact that sewing is a creative art, some people feel that it is not sufficiently intellectual to be included in the school curriculum. Bernice Fitz-Gibbon in an article on the Education of Women considers this nonsense and has expressed her views as to the basic importance of sewing and its role in education.

. . . Civilization is based on sewing. For millions of years life was confined to the warm tropics until man was ingenious

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<sup>26</sup>Bernice Fitz-Gibbon, Article No. 16 on "Merchandising of Home Sewing Products Today," Women's Wear Daily [New York], March 16, 1959, p. 9.

<sup>27</sup>Editors of American Fabrics Magazine, op. cit., pp. 80, 81.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 81.



enough to hone a bone to a needle point, thread it with animal guts so that he could sew skins together, and so be clothed warmly enough to get going in the cold northern climates.<sup>29</sup>

Miss Fitz-Gibbon also recognizes that some factions consider "that time used in actual clothes construction could better be used in education courses." While this trend is reflected by the many colleges now considering changing the emphasis in course content and decreasing the time spent in clothing construction, it is her feeling that nothing could be more basic than sewing. She states ". . . sewing is as intellectual as engineering or architecture."<sup>30</sup>

Current literature reviewed here has considered briefly the situation now as concerns the individual or consumer; the manufacturer; and the school program.

In the future "every circumstance of modern life seems to bear out the forecast that the number of women who sew is likely to increase."<sup>31</sup> What effects will this have?

It is the purpose of this study to ascertain the extent now to which a highly professional and relatively high income group, namely college Home Economics teachers uses sewing skills, and their reasons for so doing.

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<sup>29</sup>Bernice Fitz-Gibbon, #3 of a series on the "Education of Women," Journal of Home Economics, 51:241, April, 1959.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Editors of American Fabrics Magazine, op. cit., p. 81.

The following paragraph sums up and describes clearly the topic under discussion:

Home sewing is the most feminine of all the arts and crafts. It is an easy and basic way for a woman to add to her femininity, whether she sews for herself, her children or her home. It is an art where she can be creative as a woman, make herself attractive as a woman and also stretch the family budget.<sup>32</sup>

Questionnaires, devised for the purpose, (Appendix A) were sent to the teachers of Home Economics in the colleges of North Carolina and Florida. For the purpose of this study, the sample was restricted to the teachers in the white colleges.

A list was compiled of the information desired so as to aid in developing the questionnaire. References were made to three available sources of information which related to the subject of home sewing, namely: a thesis by Winnie Frances Luffen concerning the use and value of college clothing and textile courses to a selected group of females;<sup>1</sup> a marketing research report of the United States Department of Agriculture;<sup>2</sup> and a report on home sewing compiled by the editors of American Fabric Magazine.<sup>3</sup> Staff members aided in the development of the form and content of the questionnaire.

<sup>1</sup>Winnie Frances Luffen, "Opinions of Home Economics Graduates Concerning the Use and Value of Clothing and Textile Instruction at the Women's College" (unpublished, Master's thesis, The Women's College of the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, 1954), pp. 88.

<sup>2</sup>United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service, Marketing Research Division, Women's Attitudes Toward Wool and Silk, Marketing Research Report No. 125, 1954. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1954), pp. 125.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Editors of American Fabric Magazine, Home Sewing Report (New

## CHAPTER III

### METHOD OF PROCEDURE

In order to obtain information pertaining to the importance of sewing to a highly skilled and professionally trained group, questionnaires, devised for the purpose, (Appendix A) were sent to the teachers of Home Economics in the colleges of North Carolina and Florida. For the purpose of this study, the sample was restricted to the teachers in the white colleges.

A list was compiled of the information desired so as to aid in developing the questionnaire. Reference was also made to three available sources of information which related to the subject of home sewing, namely: a thesis by Winnie Frances Luffman concerning the use and value of college Clothing and Textile courses to a selected group of homemakers;<sup>1</sup> a marketing research report of the United States Department of Agriculture;<sup>2</sup> and a report on home sewing completed by the editors of American Fabrics Magazine.<sup>3</sup> Staff members aided in the development of the form and content of the questionnaire.

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<sup>1</sup>Winnie Frances Luffman, "Opinions of Home Economics Graduates Concerning the Use and Value of Clothing and Textile Instruction at the Woman's College" (unpublished, Master's thesis, The Woman's College of the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, 1954), pp. 86.

<sup>2</sup>United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service, Marketing Research Division, Women's Attitudes Toward Wool and Other Fibers, Marketing Research Report No. 153: 1955. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1957), pp. 123.

<sup>3</sup>Editors of American Fabrics Magazine, Home Sewing Report (New

The information was organized into the following parts:

(1) Professional status and personal data.

(2) Preparation in Clothing Construction. This included a check list of courses taken at graduate and undergraduate levels, and also provided space for listing other sources of preparation.

(3) Personal use of sewing skills. This included a check list for the type and frequency of sewing done for the individual, the family, and for the home. It also included an estimate of the number of garments made and the percentage which this represented in the total personal wardrobe.

(4) Personal reasons for sewing. This included a check list for determining the reasons for sewing, and factors which might influence sewing habits.

Provision was also made for expressing the personal reasons for sewing or for not sewing and for indicating whether the sewing habits expressed in the questionnaire were typical practices.

In the original plan only teachers of North Carolina were to be included in the study. On further consideration it was decided that the study would be strengthened by the inclusion of a group of similarly trained people from another state in the same Southeastern region of the United States but with as different an economic structure

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York: American Fabrics, 1958), pp. 91.



as possible. Florida was selected as the state which provided the greatest contrast to North Carolina.

Statistics from the 1958 World Almanac show the differences in the two states.

North Carolina according to the Almanac is largely a rural and industrial state. It leads the nation in the production of textiles, cigarettes, and wooden furniture. Farming, however, remains a basic industry and only one city, Charlotte, has over one hundred thousand population. North Carolina has the largest rural population of any state, however, the greatest number of people is employed in the factories. The topography of the state is of three types: the Coastal Plain, the Piedmont, and the Highlands (or mountain area). This variety in composition and type of work makes for a diversified state. In the nation it ranks twenty-seventh in area and tenth in population.

Florida, a South Atlantic state, is located farthest southeast in the United States. It is largely an urban and resort state with several cities having populations over one hundred thousand. The warm winter temperatures, and opportunities for recreation fill the state with ocean resorts and luxury hotels. Its tourists are estimated to spend more than one billion dollars annually. The major centers of the tourist trade are metropolitan Miami, and other resort areas. The major agricultural products are citrus fruits and truck-farm vegetables. Florida is a center for the sports clothes industry as is New York for the general clothing industry. While it ranks twenty-

first in area and twentieth in population in the nation, its population is increased during the tourist season by the great influx of people migrating to the winter resorts.

North Carolina has sixty-four institutions of higher learning and Florida has twenty-three. The per capita personal income of the two states for 1956, was: North Carolina 1,305 dollars; and Florida 1,762 dollars.<sup>4</sup>

In the fall of 1958 there were sixty-eight Home Economics trained teachers employed in the white colleges of North Carolina, and thirty-seven in the white colleges of Florida. Male staff members (one in North Carolina and two in Florida), who received their training in fields other than Home Economics, were not included in these totals.

Table represents 85 per cent of the North Carolina teachers questioned and 82 per cent of the Florida teachers. The colleges in which the teachers were employed are listed in Appendix B. The number of teachers responding to the questionnaire from each of these schools is also included.

#### I. PERSONAL DATA

The personal data pertaining to the teachers is presented in Table I.

The majority of the teachers in each group were from urban

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<sup>4</sup>Harry Hansen, The World Almanac and Book of Facts for 1958 (New York: New York World-Telegram Corporation, 1958), pp. 192, 182, 752.

Two of the North Carolina teachers considered themselves from a rural area. None of the Florida teachers was from a rural area.

## CHAPTER IV

### PRESENTATION OF DATA

Questionnaires were sent to the sixty-eight teachers in sixteen colleges of North Carolina and to the thirty-seven teachers in six colleges of Florida. For the purposes of this particular study the sample was restricted to the teachers in white colleges only. The majority of these teachers were employed in the three largest colleges in each state. This represented 68 per cent of the North Carolina teachers and 82 per cent of the Florida teachers.

Responses were obtained from fifty-eight of the teachers in North Carolina and from twenty-three of the teachers in Florida. These totals represent 85 per cent of the North Carolina teachers questioned and 62 per cent of the Florida teachers. The colleges in which the teachers were employed are listed in Appendix B. The number of teachers responding to the questionnaire from each of these schools is also included.

#### I. PERSONAL DATA

The personal data pertaining to the teachers is presented in Table I.

The majority of the teachers in each group were from urban communities. This included twenty-two or 95 per cent of the Florida group and forty-one or 71 per cent of the North Carolina group. Only two of the North Carolina teachers considered themselves from a rural area. None of the Florida teachers was from a rural area.

TABLE I

PERSONAL DATA PERTAINING TO THE TEACHERS  
(58 IN NORTH CAROLINA AND 23 IN FLORIDA)

|  | North Carolina |          | Florida |          |
|--|----------------|----------|---------|----------|
|  | Number         | Per cent | Number  | Per cent |
| TYPE OF COMMUNITY IN WHICH THEY ARE EMPLOYED |                |          |         |          |
| Rural  | 2              | 3.4      | 0       | 0.0      |
| Small Town                                   | 12             | 20.6     | 1       | 4.3      |
| Urban  | 41             | 71.0     | 22      | 95.7     |
| No Response                                  | 3              | 5.2      | 0       | 0.0      |
| ENROLLMENT OF SCHOOL IN WHICH THEY TEACH     |                |          |         |          |
| Less than 500                                | 8              | 13.7     | 0       | 0.0      |
| 500 - 1,000                                  | 7              | 12.1     | 2       | 8.6      |
| 1,000 - 2,000                                | 2              | 3.4      | 3       | 13.0     |
| Over 2,000                                   | 40             | 69.1     | 18      | 78.4     |
| No Response                                  | 1              | 1.7      | 0       | 0.0      |
| MEMBERS IN IMMEDIATE FAMILY GROUP            |                |          |         |          |
| Self - Only                                  | 26             | 44.8     | 9       | 39.1     |
| Husband                                      | 24             | 41.4     | 8       | 34.7     |
| Children                                     | 11             | 19.0     | 7       | 30.4     |
| Others                                       | 13             | 22.4     | 4       | 17.4     |



The majority of the teachers in each group were employed in schools with an enrollment of over two thousand. Eight of the North Carolina teachers were employed in schools with an enrollment of less than five hundred while none of the Florida teachers were from schools of such low enrollment.

There were four components of the family group. The "self only" category included those who were single or widowed and had no dependents. The number of teachers in this category represented less than half of the total group. Approximately 45 per cent of the North Carolina teachers and 39 per cent of the Florida teachers were in this single-family-member group.

Those teachers with husbands represented 41 per cent of the North Carolina teachers and 35 per cent of the Florida teachers. Of this married group, 19 per cent of the North Carolina teachers and 30 per cent of the Florida teachers had children. The number of children in the families of the North Carolina teachers ranged from one to five and from one to four in the families of the Florida teachers. There was a total of forty-three children for the eleven teachers with children in the North Carolina group and sixteen for the seven teachers in the Florida group.

Twenty-two per cent of the teachers in North Carolina and 17 per cent of the teachers in Florida indicated "other" members in the family group. No attempt was made to determine the extent of dependence of the individuals in this category.

## II. PROFESSIONAL DATA

The data pertaining to the professional status of the college teachers in North Carolina and Florida is presented in Table II.

The fifty-eight teachers of North Carolina indicated thirty-eight different colleges attended. Thirty-six of these were in the United States, one each in Russia and Estonia. The colleges attended by the greatest number of this group were The Woman's College of the University of North Carolina (16) and The University of Tennessee (8).

The twenty-three teachers of Florida indicated attendance at thirty-four different colleges. This total represented a greater variety of backgrounds for the twenty-three teachers of Florida as compared to the fifty-eight teachers of North Carolina. The colleges attended by the greatest number of Florida teachers were The Florida State University (4), Columbia University (4), The University of Tennessee (3), and The University of Chicago (3).

There was a wide range in the number of years of teaching experience with the North Carolina teachers younger in age and with less experience than the Florida teachers. Thirty-one per cent of the North Carolina teachers had five years experience or less. Twelve per cent had 16-20 years of experience. Ranking third were 10 per cent with 6-10 years experience and another 10 per cent with 31 years of experience and over.

The largest number of the Florida teachers, 26 per cent, was in the group with 11-15 years of experience. In second place was the

TABLE II

DATA PERTAINING TO THE PROFESSIONAL STATUS OF THE COLLEGE  
TEACHERS IN NORTH CAROLINA AND FLORIDA

|  | North Carolina Teachers (58) |          | Florida Teachers (23) |          |
|--|------------------------------|----------|-----------------------|----------|
|  | Number                       | Per cent | Number                | Per cent |
| <b>Professional Title</b>                          |                              |          |                       |          |
| Head of Department                                 | 6                            | 10.4     | 4                     | 17.4     |
| Professors   | 5                            | 8.6      | 4                     | 17.4     |
| Associate Professor                                | 5                            | 8.6      | 2                     | 8.7      |
| Assistant Professor                                | 5                            | 8.6      | 3                     | 13.0     |
| Instructor   | 14                           | 24.1     | 5                     | 21.8     |
| Graduate Assistant                                 | 6                            | 10.4     | 0                     | 0.0      |
| Other  | 9                            | 15.5     | 1                     | 4.3      |
| No Indication                                      | 8                            | 13.8     | 4                     | 17.4     |
| Total  | 58                           | 100.0    | 23                    | 100.0    |
| <b>Salary Range</b>                                |                              |          |                       |          |
| Below 3999   | 19                           | 32.8     | 2                     | 8.7      |
| 4000 - 5999  | 31                           | 53.4     | 8                     | 34.8     |
| 6000 - 7999  | 6                            | 10.4     | 4                     | 17.4     |
| 8000 - over  | 2                            | 3.4      | 9                     | 39.1     |
| Total  | 58                           | 100.0    | 23                    | 100.0    |
| <b>Areas of Home Economics Teaching at Present</b> |                              |          |                       |          |
| Foods  | 19                           | 32.8     | 2                     | 8.6      |
| Nutrition  | 16                           | 27.6     | 6                     | 26.1     |
| Clothing   | 20                           | 34.5     | 8                     | 34.8     |
| Textiles   | 17                           | 29.3     | 4                     | 17.4     |
| Child Development                                  | 14                           | 24.2     | 2                     | 8.6      |
| Family Relationships                               | 8                            | 13.8     | 4                     | 17.4     |
| Housing  | 16                           | 27.6     | 4                     | 17.4     |
| Home Management                                    | 19                           | 32.8     | 2                     | 8.6      |
| Home Economics Education                           | 10                           | 17.2     | 4                     | 17.4     |
| Others   | 2                            | 3.4      | 4                     | 17.4     |

group of 21 per cent with 6-10 years of experience. Ranking third was 17 per cent with 16-20 years of experience.

This data pertaining to the years of experience of the two groups were substantiated by the years of graduation indicated by the two groups. More of the North Carolina teachers were recent graduates with 36 per cent graduating in the last ten years as compared with 14 per cent of the Florida teachers graduating in the same period. Only 17 per cent of the North Carolina teachers were graduated during the 1931-40 period as compared with 42 per cent of the Florida teachers.

The professional status of the teachers is indicated by their title and salary range. In both states the largest single number of teachers were instructors - approximately 24 per cent of the North Carolina teachers and 22 per cent of the Florida teachers. There was a noticeable difference in the percentage of teachers who were full professors. There were 17 per cent of the Florida teachers in this rank as compared with only 9 per cent of the North Carolina teachers.

There was a wide variation in the salary ranges of the two states. The highest percentage (53) of the North Carolina teachers earned less than 6,000 dollars whereas the highest percentage (39) of the Florida teachers earned over 8,000 dollars. Only eight or 14 per cent of the North Carolina teachers earned more than 6,000 dollars as compared with thirteen or 57 per cent of the Florida teachers in this income group.

The areas of Home Economics being taught by the groups do not necessarily refer to particular courses but to subject matter. The



largest number of teachers in North Carolina and in Florida, 35 per cent in each state, was teaching Clothing. Twenty-nine per cent of the North Carolina teachers indicated that they taught Textiles as compared to 17 per cent of the Florida teachers. There was a great difference in the number teaching Foods in the two states--33 per cent of the North Carolina teachers as compared to 9 per cent of the Florida teachers. A larger percentage (17) of the Florida teachers were teaching courses other than Home Economics as compared to only 4 per cent of the North Carolina teachers.

The percentage of teachers in the Housing and Home Management areas in the Florida schools was not as large as the number in the North Carolina schools. There was 28 per cent teaching Housing in North Carolina as compared with 17 per cent in Florida. Thirty-three per cent were teaching in the Home Management area in North Carolina with only 9 per cent in the same area in Florida.

The majority of the teachers in both states had majored in Home Economics Education. Second to the Home Economics Education Major, more teachers had majored in Clothing and Textiles than in any other area thus there was a greater number teaching in this area.

None of the Florida teachers indicated majoring in Housing or Home Management either as an undergraduate or a graduate. Thus the number teaching in these areas was smaller.

There were thirty-six other occupational or professional responsibilities mentioned by the teachers in North Carolina and 19 by those in Florida. Few of the responsibilities were mentioned by a

number of the teachers. Some of these were: Home Economics Club Sponsor, Supervisor of the Home Management House and Counseling.

Thirty-six (62 per cent) of the teachers in North Carolina and eighteen (78 per cent) of the teachers in Florida indicated that they had experience in positions other than teaching. The specific types of positions were not considered pertinent to this study.

Table III represents the subject matter in Clothing Construction most frequently included in college preparation of the teachers. The responses from the group indicated that all of the teachers had considerable education in this area in their undergraduate and graduate preparation.

The three subjects in which the greatest number of teachers in both North Carolina and Florida indicated preparation were as follows: (1) Elementary Clothing Construction, (2) Advanced Clothing Construction, and (3) Clothing Selection and Care.

The subjects in which the lowest numbers of teachers in the two states indicated preparation differed slightly. The areas mentioned less frequently by the North Carolina teachers were Advanced Costume Design (28 per cent), Draping (36 per cent), and Children's or Family Clothing (45 per cent). The areas mentioned less frequently by the Florida teachers were Advanced Costume Design (35 per cent), Children's or Family Clothing (48 per cent), and Tailoring (52 per cent). Although these particular subjects were mentioned less frequently, the percentages indicate that a representative number of the total group of

TABLE III  
COLLEGE PREPARATION IN CLOTHING CONSTRUCTION

| Subject Matter                   | North Carolina Teachers |          |          |          |       |          |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------|----------|
|                                  | Undergraduate           |          | Graduate |          | Total | Per cent |
|                                  | Number                  | Per cent | Number   | Per cent |       |          |
| Elementary Clothing Construction | 54                      | 93.1     | 0        | 0.0      | 54    | 93.1     |
| Advanced Clothing Construction   | 38                      | 65.4     | 10       | 17.2     | 48    | 82.8     |
| Clothing Selection and Care      | 41                      | 70.5     | 7        | 12.0     | 48    | 82.8     |
| Children's (or Family) Clothing  | 20                      | 34.5     | 6        | 10.4     | 26    | 45.8     |
| Pattern Construction             | 24                      | 41.3     | 6        | 10.4     | 30    | 51.7     |
| Costume Design                   | 33                      | 57.1     | 4        | 6.9      | 37    | 63.9     |
| Advanced Costume Design          | 5                       | 8.6      | 11       | 19.0     | 16    | 27.6     |
| Tailoring                        | 22                      | 37.9     | 13       | 22.4     | 35    | 60.0     |
| Draping                          | 10                      | 17.2     | 11       | 19.0     | 21    | 36.2     |

  

| Subject Matter                   | Florida Teachers |          |          |          |       |          |
|----------------------------------|------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------|----------|
|                                  | Undergraduate    |          | Graduate |          | Total | Per cent |
|                                  | Number           | Per cent | Number   | Per cent |       |          |
| Elementary Clothing Construction | 20               | 87.1     | 3        | 13.0     | 23    | 100.0    |
| Advanced Clothing Construction   | 17               | 73.9     | 6        | 26.1     | 23    | 100.0    |
| Clothing Selection and Care      | 16               | 69.5     | 2        | 8.6      | 18    | 78.3     |
| Children's (or Family) Clothing  | 10               | 43.5     | 1        | 4.3      | 11    | 47.9     |
| Pattern Construction             | 10               | 43.5     | 4        | 17.4     | 14    | 60.7     |
| Costume Design                   | 13               | 56.5     | 3        | 13.0     | 16    | 69.5     |
| Advanced Costume Design          | 4                | 17.4     | 4        | 17.4     | 8     | 34.8     |
| Tailoring                        | 8                | 34.8     | 4        | 17.4     | 12    | 52.3     |
| Draping                          | 7                | 30.2     | 6        | 26.1     | 13    | 56.5     |

teachers had received extensive preparation in Clothing Construction regardless of the areas of professional specialization indicated.

A greater percentage of the Florida teachers received preparation in all the clothing subjects with the exception of two in which North Carolina had the larger number. Preparation in Clothing Selection and Care was indicated by 83 per cent of the teachers in North Carolina as compared to 78 per cent of the teachers in Florida. The only other subject in which more North Carolina than Florida teachers had preparation was Tailoring, with 60 per cent in North Carolina and 52 per cent in Florida.

Other than college training, the group listed various sources of preparation, help, or advice relating to the development of their sewing skills. Those mentioned most frequently by the teachers in North Carolina were:

|  | Per cent |
|--|----------|
| (1) Instruction by Mother  | 36       |
| (2) Examination of ready-made clothes                                    | 30       |
| (3) Independent study of books, pamphlets<br>and other literature        | 21       |
| (4) Courses in High School Home Economics                                | 14       |
| (5) The Bishop Method of Clothing<br>Construction (Courses or Workshops) | 9        |

The sources of aid mentioned most frequently by the teachers in Florida were:

|   | Per cent |
|---|----------|
| (1) Examination of ready-made clothes                             | 44       |
| (2) Instruction by Mother   | 26       |
| (3) Suggestions by friends and co-workers                         | 9        |
| (4) Independent study of books, pamphlets<br>and other literature | 9        |
| (5) Interest in sewing as a hobby                                 | 5        |



### III. PERSONAL USE OF SEWING SKILLS

The teachers of Home Economics in the colleges of North Carolina and Florida were questioned in detail on their personal use of sewing skills. This information is presented in Table IV.

In answer to the question, "Do you sew?" 88 per cent of the teachers in North Carolina and 93 per cent of the teachers in Florida replied in the affirmative. Five per cent of the North Carolina teachers and 7 per cent of the Florida teachers indicated that they did not sew. No reply was indicated by 7 per cent of the North Carolina teachers.

The percentage of this highly professional group of Home Economists who sewed is quite high compared to some national and statewide studies. In a national cross-section the United States Department of Agriculture found that 58 per cent of all women and girls in the United States, ages 18-65, did some sewing in 1955.<sup>1</sup> The study of home demonstration work in North Carolina showed that 78 per cent of the club women questioned did some sewing.<sup>2</sup> Even more recently

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<sup>1</sup>United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service, Marketing Research Division, Women's Attitudes Toward Wool and Other Fibers, Marketing Research Report No. 153: 1955. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1957), p. 41.

<sup>2</sup>North Carolina Agricultural Extension Office, "Some Results and Interpretations of the Study of Home Demonstration Work in North Carolina" (Raleigh, North Carolina: Agricultural Extension Office, 1958), p. 14. (Mimeographed.)

TABLE IV  
TYPE AND FREQUENCY OF SEWING DONE

| Type of Sewing                                  | North Carolina Teachers (58) |          |         |          |              |          |       |          |               |          | Florida Teachers (23) |          |         |          |              |          |       |          |               |          |
|---|------------------------------|----------|---------|----------|--------------|----------|-------|----------|---------------|----------|-----------------------|----------|---------|----------|--------------|----------|-------|----------|---------------|----------|
|   | Total making                 |          | Usually |          | Occasionally |          | Never |          | No indication |          | Total making          |          | Usually |          | Occasionally |          | Never |          | No indication |          |
|   | No.                          | Per cent | No.     | Per cent | No.          | Per cent | No.   | Per cent | No.           | Per cent | No.                   | Per cent | No.     | Per cent | No.          | Per cent | No.   | Per cent | No.           | Per cent |
| <b>FOR ADULT FEMALES</b>                        |                              |          |         |          |              |          |       |          |               |          |                       |          |         |          |              |          |       |          |               |          |
| Dresses   | 49                           | 84.5     | 34      | 58.8     | 15           | 25.9     | 2     | 3.4      | 7             | 12.1     | 16                    | 69.5     | 9       | 39.1     | 7            | 30.4     | 2     | 8.7      | 5             | 21.8     |
| Skirts  | 46                           | 79.3     | 30      | 51.7     | 16           | 27.6     | 2     | 3.4      | 10            | 17.2     | 14                    | 60.7     | 4       | 17.4     | 10           | 43.5     | 3     | 13.0     | 6             | 26.1     |
| Blouses   | 44                           | 75.8     | 18      | 31.0     | 26           | 44.8     | 2     | 3.4      | 12            | 20.6     | 15                    | 65.0     | 3       | 13.0     | 12           | 52.3     | 2     | 8.7      | 6             | 26.1     |
| Suits   | 38                           | 65.4     | 17      | 29.3     | 21           | 36.2     | 10    | 17.2     | 10            | 17.2     | 9                     | 39.1     | 3       | 13.0     | 6            | 26.1     | 6     | 26.1     | 8             | 34.8     |
| Coats   | 32                           | 55.2     | 9       | 15.5     | 23           | 39.6     | 16    | 27.6     | 10            | 17.2     | 9                     | 39.1     | 1       | 4.3      | 8            | 34.8     | 7     | 30.4     | 7             | 30.4     |
| Formals   | 28                           | 48.3     | 4       | 6.9      | 24           | 41.4     | 18    | 31.0     | 12            | 20.6     | 8                     | 34.8     | 2       | 8.7      | 6            | 26.1     | 9     | 39.1     | 6             | 26.1     |
| Sleeping garments                               | 27                           | 46.6     | 11      | 19.0     | 16           | 27.6     | 18    | 31.0     | 13            | 22.4     | 8                     | 34.8     | 3       | 13.0     | 5            | 21.8     | 7     | 30.4     | 8             | 34.8     |
| Lingerie  | 9                            | 15.5     | 2       | 3.4      | 7            | 12.1     | 37    | 63.9     | 12            | 20.6     | 2                     | 8.7      | 0       | 0.0      | 2            | 8.7      | 13    | 56.5     | 8             | 34.8     |
| Sportswear                                      | 25                           | 43.1     | 12      | 20.6     | 23           | 39.6     | 8     | 13.8     | 25            | 43.1     | 10                    | 43.5     | 3       | 13.0     | 7            | 30.4     | 6     | 26.1     | 7             | 30.4     |
| Aprons  | 40                           | 69.1     | 22      | 37.9     | 18           | 31.0     | 10    | 17.2     | 8             | 13.8     | 14                    | 60.7     | 4       | 17.4     | 10           | 43.5     | 3     | 13.0     | 6             | 26.1     |
| Others  | 6                            | 10.4     | 5       | 8.6      | 1            | 1.7      | 7     | 12.1     | 45            | 77.5     | 5                     | 21.8     | 1       | 4.3      | 4            | 17.4     | 1     | 4.3      | 17            | 73.9     |
| <b>FOR CHILDREN (Infants through 8th grade)</b> |                              |          |         |          |              |          |       |          |               |          |                       |          |         |          |              |          |       |          |               |          |
| Dresses   | 23                           | 39.6     | 4       | 6.9      | 19           | 32.8     | 19    | 32.8     | 16            | 27.6     | 8                     | 34.8     | 4       | 17.4     | 4            | 17.4     | 6     | 26.1     | 9             | 39.1     |
| Skirts  | 16                           | 27.6     | 4       | 6.9      | 12           | 20.6     | 23    | 39.6     | 19            | 32.8     | 5                     | 21.8     | 2       | 8.7      | 3            | 13.0     | 6     | 26.1     | 12            | 52.3     |
| Blouses   | 15                           | 25.9     | 2       | 3.4      | 13           | 22.4     | 23    | 39.6     | 20            | 34.5     | 4                     | 17.4     | 2       | 8.7      | 2            | 8.7      | 6     | 26.1     | 13            | 56.5     |
| Suits   | 10                           | 17.2     | 2       | 3.4      | 8            | 13.8     | 27    | 46.6     | 21            | 36.2     | 2                     | 8.7      | 0       | 0.0      | 2            | 8.7      | 7     | 30.4     | 14            | 60.7     |
| Coats   | 12                           | 20.6     | 2       | 3.4      | 10           | 17.2     | 25    | 43.1     | 21            | 36.2     | 1                     | 4.3      | 0       | 0.0      | 1            | 4.3      | 8     | 34.8     | 14            | 60.7     |
| Sleeping garments                               | 14                           | 24.2     | 5       | 8.6      | 9            | 15.5     | 25    | 43.1     | 19            | 32.8     | 5                     | 21.8     | 1       | 4.3      | 4            | 17.4     | 6     | 26.1     | 13            | 56.5     |
| Playclothes                                     | 17                           | 29.4     | 9       | 15.5     | 8            | 13.8     | 21    | 36.2     | 20            | 34.5     | 7                     | 26.1     | 1       | 4.3      | 6            | 26.1     | 6     | 26.1     | 10            | 43.5     |
| Petticoats                                      | 9                            | 15.5     | 2       | 3.4      | 7            | 12.1     | 29    | 50.0     | 20            | 34.5     | 1                     | 4.3      | 1       | 4.3      | 0            | 0.0      | 9     | 39.1     | 13            | 56.5     |
| Others  | 6                            | 10.4     | 0       | 0.0      | 6            | 10.4     | 14    | 24.2     | 38            | 65.4     | 1                     | 4.3      | 1       | 4.3      | 0            | 0.0      | 6     | 26.1     | 16            | 69.5     |
| <b>FOR ADULT MALES</b>                          |                              |          |         |          |              |          |       |          |               |          |                       |          |         |          |              |          |       |          |               |          |
| Shirts  | 21                           | 36.2     | 2       | 3.4      | 19           | 32.8     | 20    | 34.5     | 17            | 29.3     | 5                     | 21.8     | 1       | 4.3      | 4            | 17.4     | 7     | 30.4     | 11            | 47.9     |
| Coats   | 5                            | 8.6      | 0       | 0.0      | 5            | 8.6      | 33    | 57.1     | 20            | 34.5     | 0                     | 0.0      | 0       | 0.0      | 0            | 0.0      | 10    | 43.5     | 13            | 56.5     |
| Lounging or sleeping garments                   | 20                           | 34.5     | 2       | 3.4      | 18           | 31.0     | 23    | 39.6     | 15            | 25.9     | 2                     | 8.7      | 2       | 8.7      | 0            | 0.0      | 9     | 39.1     | 12            | 52.3     |
| Others  | 2                            | 3.4      | 0       | 0.0      | 2            | 3.4      | 14    | 24.2     | 42            | 72.2     | 3                     | 13.0     | 2       | 8.7      | 1            | 4.3      | 6     | 26.1     | 16            | 69.5     |
| <b>CLOTHING RENOVATION</b>                      |                              |          |         |          |              |          |       |          |               |          |                       |          |         |          |              |          |       |          |               |          |
| Alterations                                     | 55                           | 94.8     | 43      | 73.9     | 12           | 20.6     | 0     | 0.0      | 3             | 5.2      | 20                    | 87.1     | 13      | 56.5     | 7            | 30.4     | 0     | 0.0      | 3             | 13.0     |
| Mending   | 54                           | 93.1     | 40      | 69.1     | 14           | 24.2     | 1     | 1.7      | 3             | 5.2      | 17                    | 72.9     | 12      | 52.3     | 5            | 21.8     | 1     | 4.3      | 5             | 21.8     |
| Patching  | 43                           | 73.9     | 22      | 37.9     | 21           | 36.2     | 5     | 8.6      | 10            | 17.2     | 12                    | 52.3     | 8       | 34.8     | 4            | 17.4     | 3     | 13.0     | 8             | 34.8     |
| Repairing                                       | 41                           | 70.5     | 39      | 67.1     | 10           | 17.2     | 2     | 3.4      | 15            | 25.9     | 18                    | 78.4     | 12      | 52.3     | 6            | 26.1     | 1     | 4.3      | 4             | 17.4     |
| Making over clothing                            | 24                           | 41.4     | 13      | 22.4     | 23           | 39.6     | 11    | 19.0     | 23            | 39.6     | 14                    | 60.7     | 6       | 26.1     | 8            | 34.8     | 2     | 8.7      | 7             | 30.4     |
| Others  | 6                            | 10.4     | 4       | 6.9      | 2            | 3.4      | 2     | 3.4      | 50            | 86.2     | 3                     | 13.0     | 1       | 4.3      | 2            | 8.7      | 0     | 0.0      | 20            | 87.1     |



TABLE IV (continued)

| Type<br>of<br>Sewing | North Carolina Teachers (58) |          |         |          |              |          |       |          |               |          | Florida Teachers (23) |          |         |          |              |          |       |          |               |          |
|----------------------|------------------------------|----------|---------|----------|--------------|----------|-------|----------|---------------|----------|-----------------------|----------|---------|----------|--------------|----------|-------|----------|---------------|----------|
|                      | Total making                 |          | Usually |          | Occasionally |          | Never |          | No indication |          | Total making          |          | Usually |          | Occasionally |          | Never |          | No indication |          |
|                      | No.                          | Per cent | No.     | Per cent | No.          | Per cent | No.   | Per cent | No.           | Per cent | No.                   | Per cent | No.     | Per cent | No.          | Per cent | No.   | Per cent | No.           | Per cent |
| HOME FURNISHINGS     |                              |          |         |          |              |          |       |          |               |          |                       |          |         |          |              |          |       |          |               |          |
| Curtains             | 43                           | 73.9     | 21      | 36.2     | 22           | 37.9     | 6     | 10.4     | 9             | 15.5     | 18                    | 78.4     | 10      | 43.5     | 8            | 34.8     | 1     | 4.3      | 4             | 17.4     |
| Draperies            | 41                           | 70.5     | 24      | 41.4     | 17           | 29.3     | 8     | 13.8     | 9             | 15.5     | 16                    | 69.5     | 9       | 39.1     | 7            | 30.4     | 1     | 4.3      | 6             | 26.1     |
| Slip covers          | 31                           | 53.4     | 7       | 12.1     | 24           | 41.4     | 18    | 31.0     | 9             | 15.5     | 10                    | 43.5     | 6       | 26.1     | 4            | 17.4     | 6     | 26.1     | 7             | 30.4     |
| Bedspreads           | 23                           | 39.6     | 6       | 10.4     | 17           | 29.3     | 21    | 36.2     | 14            | 24.2     | 11                    | 47.9     | 1       | 4.3      | 10           | 43.5     | 4     | 17.4     | 8             | 34.8     |
| Pillows              | 22                           | 37.9     | 9       | 15.5     | 13           | 22.4     | 19    | 32.8     | 18            | 31.0     | 8                     | 34.8     | 1       | 4.3      | 7            | 30.4     | 7     | 30.4     | 8             | 34.8     |
| Dish towels          | 23                           | 39.6     | 10      | 17.2     | 13           | 22.4     | 18    | 31.0     | 17            | 29.3     | 9                     | 39.1     | 2       | 8.7      | 7            | 30.4     | 4     | 17.4     | 10            | 43.5     |
| Tablecloths          | 21                           | 36.2     | 7       | 12.1     | 14           | 24.2     | 20    | 34.5     | 17            | 29.3     | 7                     | 30.4     | 1       | 4.3      | 6            | 26.1     | 7     | 30.4     | 9             | 39.1     |
| Place mats           | 35                           | 60.0     | 9       | 15.5     | 26           | 44.8     | 13    | 22.4     | 10            | 17.2     | 13                    | 56.5     | 2       | 8.7      | 11           | 47.9     | 3     | 13.0     | 7             | 30.4     |
| Napkins              | 31                           | 53.4     | 6       | 10.4     | 25           | 43.1     | 16    | 27.6     | 11            | 19.0     | 10                    | 43.5     | 1       | 4.3      | 9            | 39.1     | 4     | 17.4     | 9             | 39.1     |
| Sheets               | 9                            | 15.5     | 3       | 5.2      | 6            | 10.4     | 32    | 55.2     | 17            | 29.3     | 1                     | 4.3      | 0       | 0.0      | 1            | 4.3      | 11    | 47.9     | 11            | 47.9     |
| Pillowcases          | 16                           | 27.6     | 3       | 5.2      | 13           | 22.4     | 26    | 44.8     | 16            | 27.6     | 2                     | 8.7      | 0       | 0.0      | 2            | 8.7      | 9     | 39.1     | 12            | 52.3     |
| Others               | 3                            | 5.2      | 1       | 1.7      | 2            | 3.4      | 12    | 20.6     | 43            | 73.9     | 3                     | 13.0     | 2       | 8.7      | 1            | 4.3      | 2     | 8.7      | 18            | 78.4     |

Sylvia Porter estimated that "two out of every three females over 12 in our land" are sewing.<sup>3</sup>

Sewing for adult females. The majority of the teachers who made garments for women made dresses, skirts, and blouses. A smaller but still substantial number made suits and coats (Table IV). Lingerie was the type of garment less frequently made.

The teachers in North Carolina made a higher percentage of all the items listed for adult females than the teachers in Florida with the exception of only two items of the eleven listed. More teachers in both states (85 per cent in North Carolina and 70 per cent in Florida) listed dresses as the garment most frequently made at home. Skirts were mentioned next in frequency by the North Carolina teachers (79 per cent) and blouses by the Florida teachers (65 per cent). Third in the frequency mentioned were blouses in North Carolina (76 per cent) and skirts in Florida (61 per cent). More of the teachers in North Carolina indicated that they usually made dresses and skirts and occasionally made blouses whereas the teachers in Florida usually made dresses but list all other garments as being made occasionally.

Over 50 per cent of the teachers in North Carolina indicated that they made aprons (69 per cent), suits (65 per cent) and coats (55 per cent). Aprons were usually made by this group. Suits and coats were made occasionally. The Florida teachers ranked these items of apparel in the same order but less than 50 per cent made them.

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<sup>3</sup>Sylvia Porter, "Major Industry-Home Sewing Is Revived," The Greensboro [North Carolina] Daily News, September 25, 1958, p. B20.



The only items made by a greater percentage of the Florida teachers than the North Carolina teachers were sportswear and items shown as "other" garments. The difference in the number making sportswear was negligible.

Greater differences were shown in the "other" group (North Carolina making 10 per cent and Florida, 22 per cent). The "other" garments listed were hats, accessories, smocks, robes, housecoats, and bathing suits.

Comments indicated that the lingerie made was for the older women in the family groups.

Sewing for children. All of the garments for children were cited by a higher percentage of North Carolina teachers than by those in Florida. This is perhaps a result of the larger families indicated by the teachers in North Carolina. Approximately one-third of the teachers in each state sewed for children from infancy through the eighth grade.

As was the case in the sewing done for adult women, dresses were the major item made for children (North Carolina 40 per cent and Florida 35 per cent). Play clothes were named by the second largest group of people (29 per cent of the North Carolina teachers and 26 per cent of the Florida teachers). Skirts were in third place with 28 per cent making them in North Carolina and 22 per cent, in Florida. Garments listed in the "other" column for children were infants wear, boy's shirts and sports shirts, formals, and costumes. Costumes were indicated most frequently.

The teachers in both groups indicated garments for children as being occasionally or never made more frequently than those usually made. Fifteen per cent of the North Carolina teachers indicated play clothes as the garment usually made most frequently. The Florida teachers indicated dresses as the type of garment most often usually made.

Sewing for adult males. About one-third of the teachers in North Carolina did some sewing for men as compared to about one-fifth of the teachers in Florida. The garment most frequently made was shirts (36 per cent in North Carolina and 22 per cent in Florida). Almost the same percentage (35) of the North Carolina teachers made lounging or sleeping garments although only 9 per cent of the Florida teachers indicated this item. Only two of the North Carolina teachers (3 per cent) listed "other" garments made for men while three of the Florida teachers (13 per cent) listed "other" items. The garments listed were suits, slacks and Bermuda shorts.

The items of men's apparel were indicated as garments occasionally made rather than being a part of their usual sewing practice.

Clothing renovation. A greater percentage of the teachers in North Carolina and in Florida indicated they did this kind of sewing more than any other type. The 95 per cent of the North Carolina teachers who said they made clothing alterations is even larger than the per cent who indicated that they sewed. The same is true for the 93 per cent of the North Carolina teachers who mended clothes. The

percentages of North Carolina teachers renovating garments decreased in the order of the type of renovation listed. The greatest percentage indicated alterations, next mending, patching, down to the least mentioned "other" items.

A greater percentage (87) of the Florida teachers also made alterations. This was also higher than the percentage doing any other type of sewing. In fact none of the teachers in either group indicated that they "never" made alterations. Three teachers in each state failed to indicate their practice in clothing renovation.

Another high percentage (74) of the Florida teachers did some mending. The percentage of Florida teachers (52) who did some patching was less than that of the North Carolina teachers (74). Some of the North Carolina teachers specified that they patched with iron-on tape which may have made the difference in the percentage. A greater percentage of the Florida teachers indicated that they repaired (78) and made over clothing (60) than did the North Carolina teachers (with 71 and 41 per cent respectively).

Many of the teachers specified that they renovated hats, replaced snaps, hooks and eyes, buttons, and hems. Several mentioned embroidery and knitting. Some of these items, however, do not relate to sewing skills.

Home furnishings. A study of the frequency of sewing done for the home disclosed that 74 per cent of the North Carolina teachers and 78 per cent of the Florida teachers made curtains with about half of this 78 per cent usually making them and half making them occasionally.

A high percentage of both groups showed that they also made draperies (71 per cent in North Carolina and 70 per cent in Florida). More than half of the total per cent making draperies indicated that they usually made them. More people usually made curtains and draperies than any other household item.

The percentages show that most of the other items are largely indicated as being made occasionally. Place mats were ranked after draperies in the percentage of teachers making them (North Carolina teachers 60; Florida teachers 57). A greater percentage of the North Carolina teachers (53) made slip covers than did the Florida teachers (44). However, a greater percentage of the Florida teachers (48) made bedspreads than did the North Carolina teachers (40). The three items mentioned least by both groups of teachers were: (1) sheets - with 16 per cent in North Carolina and 4 per cent in Florida; (2) pillowcases - with 28 per cent in North Carolina and 9 per cent in Florida; and (3) tablecloths - with 36 per cent in North Carolina and 30 per cent in Florida.

Some things that were written in under home furnishings were upholstering, dust ruffles, rugs, hand work, and weaving of cloth. This report, however, is only concerned with the items requiring sewing skills.

Comparative use of sewing skills. Compared with a National survey by the United States Department of Agriculture the teachers in North Carolina and Florida are beyond the national average in their use of sewing skills. The national survey gave the percentage of all



women interviewed who did four types of sewing. Table V shows the percentages of North Carolina and Florida teachers as compared to the national average.

TABLE V  
PERCENTAGES OF WOMEN DOING FOUR TYPES OF SEWING

| Type of Sewing        | Percentages in: |         |  |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------|--|
|                       | North Carolina  | Florida | United States<br>Department of<br>Agriculture<br>Report <sup>4</sup> |
| Mending               | 93              | 74      | 46   |
| New clothes           | 85              | 70      | 40   |
| Alteration of clothes | 95              | 87      | 37   |
| Household items       | 74              | 78      | 35   |

The percentages of teachers in North Carolina and Florida who do these types of sewing are almost double the national percentage in all of the items.

The following quotation is taken from the summary of the study by the United States Department of Agriculture and is true of this study.

Types of Garments Sewn.--More home sewers make new clothes for women--presumably themselves--and for children than for infants and men.

The great majority of women who made new clothes in the year

<sup>4</sup>United States Department of Agriculture, op. cit., p. 41.

preceding the interview made women's dresses, and substantial proportions made skirts and blouses. Fewer made lingerie or suits or coats.<sup>5</sup>

#### IV. NUMBER OF GARMENTS MADE AND PERCENTAGE OF WARDROBE

Tables VI and VII show the number of garments made and the percentage of the wardrobe which this number represents. As a supplement to the type of sewing done and as a means of determining the amount of sewing done, each individual was asked to give the approximate number of garments made during the past two years. They were also requested to estimate the percentage of their total personal wardrobe represented by the garments made for themselves during this time.

The median number of garments made in a year during this two year period was fifteen or approximately eight each year by the teachers in North Carolina. The median number of garments made by the teachers in Florida was ten or approximately five garments each year. The actual number of garments made by the North Carolina teachers ranged from 0-125 while the number made by the Florida teachers ranged from 0-35.

Sixteen per cent of the North Carolina teachers indicated that they made no garments, another 16 per cent made 11-15 garments and the same percentage made 21-25 garments. The largest percentage of Florida teachers (22) indicated that they made 6-10 garments. The number of

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 42.

TABLE VI  
NUMBER OF GARMENTS MADE

| Number of Garments | North Carolina Teachers |          | Florida Teachers |          |
|--------------------|-------------------------|----------|------------------|----------|
|                    | Number                  | Per cent | Number           | Per cent |
| 0                  | 9                       | 15.5     | 4                | 17.4     |
| 1-5                | 6                       | 10.4     | 3                | 13.0     |
| 6-10               | 8                       | 13.8     | 5                | 21.8     |
| 11-15              | 9                       | 15.5     | 3                | 13.0     |
| 16-20              | 9                       | 15.5     | 3                | 13.0     |
| 21-25              | 5                       | 8.6      | 1                | 4.3      |
| 26-30              | 2                       | 3.4      | 2                | 8.7      |
| 31-35              | 1                       | 1.7      | 1                | 4.3      |
| 36-40              | 1                       | 1.7      | 0                | 0.0      |
| 41-45              | 0                       | 0.0      | 0                | 0.0      |
| 46-50              | 3                       | 5.2      | 0                | 0.0      |
| 51-55              | 0                       | 0.0      | 0                | 0.0      |
| 56-60              | 1                       | 1.7      | 0                | 0.0      |
| 125                | 1                       | 1.7      | 0                | 0.0      |
| No indication      | 3                       | 5.2      | 1                | 4.3      |
| Total              | 58                      | 99.9     | 23               | 99.8     |
| Median             | 15 or 8 per year        |          | 10 or 5 per year |          |
| Mean               | 16 or 8 per year        |          | 11 or 6 per year |          |

TABLE VII

## PER CENT OF WARDROBE MADE

| Per cent of Wardrobe | North Carolina Teachers |          | Florida Teachers |          |
|----------------------|-------------------------|----------|------------------|----------|
|                      | Number                  | Per cent | Number           | Per cent |
| 0                    | 6                       | 10.4     | 4                | 17.4     |
| 1-5                  | 4                       | 6.9      | 3                | 13.0     |
| 6-10                 | 3                       | 5.2      | 2                | 8.7      |
| 11-15                | 1                       | 1.7      | 0                | 0.0      |
| 16-20                | 1                       | 1.7      | 0                | 0.0      |
| 21-25                | 4                       | 6.9      | 3                | 13.0     |
| 26-30                | 0                       | 0.0      | 0                | 0.0      |
| 31-35                | 0                       | 0.0      | 1                | 4.3      |
| 36-40                | 1                       | 1.7      | 3                | 13.0     |
| 41-45                | 1                       | 1.7      | 0                | 0.0      |
| 46-50                | 8                       | 13.8     | 1                | 4.3      |
| 51-55                | 0                       | 0.0      | 0                | 0.0      |
| 56-60                | 1                       | 1.7      | 0                | 0.0      |
| 61-65                | 0                       | 0.0      | 0                | 0.0      |
| 66-70                | 2                       | 3.4      | 0                | 0.0      |
| 71-75                | 4                       | 6.9      | 1                | 4.3      |
| 76-80                | 2                       | 3.4      | 1                | 4.3      |
| 81-85                | 0                       | 0.0      | 0                | 0.0      |
| 86-90                | 5                       | 8.6      | 1                | 4.3      |
| 91-95                | 6                       | 10.4     | 0                | 0.0      |
| 96-100               | 2                       | 3.4      | 1                | 4.3      |
| No indication        | 7                       | 12.1     | 2                | 8.7      |
| Total                | 58                      | 99.9     | 23               | 99.6     |
| Median               |                         | 50       |                  | 25       |
| Mean                 |                         | 42       |                  | 27       |



garments ranked by the second highest percentage of North Carolina teachers was 6-10 with 14 per cent making them. The second largest group of Florida teachers (17 per cent) made no garments. Ranking fifth were 5 per cent of the North Carolina teachers making 46-50 garments in two years and 3 per cent of the Florida teachers making 26-30 garments during this period.

The comparison of the number of women making garments in this study is higher than the figures given or calculated from the national reports previously cited.

Forty per cent of the women in the national survey made by the United States Department of Agriculture indicated that they made new garments.<sup>6</sup> In the study of home demonstration club women in North Carolina it was found that 68 per cent made new garments.<sup>7</sup> This study of the teachers revealed that 79 per cent of the North Carolina teachers and 78 per cent of the Florida teachers questioned made new garments.

According to figures included in the article in Time magazine women sew an average of four to six garments a year.<sup>8</sup> The report of the United States Department of Agriculture gives nine as the median number of items made by the 40 per cent who did make new garments.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>United States Department of Agriculture, op. cit., p. 41.

<sup>7</sup>North Carolina Agricultural Extension Office, op. cit., p. 15.

<sup>8</sup>"Modern Living, Sew and Reap," Time, (November 10, 1958), p. 80.

<sup>9</sup>United States Department of Agriculture, op. cit., p. 109.

The group of teachers in North Carolina and Florida were reported a little differently as the number is based on the whole group--not only on those who indicated that they did sew. Even considering the different group make-up, the median of eight items for North Carolina and five for the Florida teachers compares well with the national figures given.

The number of garments made is more significant when the percentage of the total wardrobe represented by this number is considered (Table VII). The article in Time estimated that 20 per cent of all feminine clothes are now made at home.<sup>10</sup> The median percentage of the total wardrobe made at home by the North Carolina teachers was 50 per cent and 25 per cent for the Florida teachers. Thus the total wardrobe of these two professional groups is much higher than figures quoted as national estimates of the number of garments made.

The percentages of the wardrobe made most frequently by the teachers in North Carolina were as follows:

- 14% made 46-50 per cent of their garments,
- 12% made none,
- 10% made 91-95 per cent, and
- 10% made no indication of the percentage of garments made.

The Florida teachers indicated the percentages of their wardrobes made as follows:

- 17% made no percentage of their wardrobe,
- 17% made no indication of the percentage made,
- 13% made 21-25 per cent of their wardrobe, and
- 13% made 36-40 per cent.

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<sup>10</sup>"Modern Living, Sew and Reap," op. cit.

Thus the garments made represent a large proportion of the clothes in the total wardrobes of the teachers in both states.

Most of the Florida teachers indicated that this was typical of their sewing habits for the past two years. Only two or 9 per cent indicated otherwise. These considered the lack of time as the reason for its not being typical of their sewing practices.

Six or 10 per cent of the North Carolina teachers reported this as not being their usual practice. The reason given most frequently by this group was the number of additional responsibilities leaving no time available.

#### V. REASONS FOR SEWING

The reasons for sewing included in the questionnaire were similar to those in the report on home sewing compiled by the editors of American Fabrics.<sup>11</sup> The ranking of the reasons given by the teachers in order of their importance to them is shown in Table VIII.

TABLE VIII

#### REASONS FOR SEWING

| Reason for Sewing                 | Rank according to:      |                  |                        |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|------------------------|
|                                   | North Carolina teachers | Florida teachers | American Fabric Survey |
| Enjoyment of Sewing               | 3                       | 1                | 1                      |
| Economic Value                    | 1                       | 2                | 2                      |
| Opportunity for Creativity        | 4                       | 3                | 3                      |
| To get better fitting and garment | 2                       | 5                | 4                      |
| Others                            | 5                       | 4                | 5                      |

<sup>11</sup>Editors of American Fabrics Magazine, Home Sewing Report (New York: American Fabrics, 1958), p. 81.

The reasons given for sewing by the Florida teachers was more similar to those given by the larger group surveyed than the reasons given by the North Carolina teachers. They considered the economic value and the possibility of better fitting garments as of more importance to them than enjoyment of sewing and the opportunity for creativity.

The other reasons given for sewing repeated these in somewhat different phrasing as in the following statements:

"Can't find what I want ready-made."  
 "Improve techniques for sewing."  
 "Could not find what they wanted in the stores."  
 "Better material available at lower cost."  
 "To satisfy urge to buy pretty fabrics."  
 "To keep in practice in sewing skills as a help in teaching."

The basic reason given for not sewing was the lack of time. Another reason expressed by many was the lack of interest and enjoyment of sewing. Several indicated that they did not know how to sew. Others were out of practice in sewing and fitting skills.

## VI. FACTORS INFLUENCING SEWING HABITS

The factors influencing the sewing habits of the two groups of teachers are shown in Table IX.

Approximately 75 per cent of the North Carolina teachers indicated that: (1) fabrics and supplies were available; (2) the garments met their standards better than those purchased for a similar amount of money and (3) that the amount of time for sewing limited their creativity.



TABLE IX  
FACTORS INFLUENCING SEWING HABITS

|   | North Carolina Teachers (58) |          |               |
|---|------------------------------|----------|---------------|
|   | Yes                          | No       | No Indication |
|   | Per cent                     | Per cent | Per cent      |
| 1. Are good fabrics and supplies readily available in your community?   | 75.8                         | 19.0     | 5.2           |
| 2. Do you sew because the selection of garments sold in your community is limited?                                      | 10.4                         | 73.9     | 15.5          |
| 3. Would you sew more if your income were less?   | 50.0                         | 43.1     | 6.9           |
| 4. Does the amount of time you can spend on sewing limit your creativity?   | 72.2                         | 20.6     | 6.9           |
| 5. Do the garments you make meet your standards better than those which can be purchased for a similar amount of money? | 77.4                         | 10.4     | 12.1          |
|   | Florida Teachers (23)        |          |               |
|   | Yes                          | No       | No Indication |
|   | Per cent                     | Per cent | Per cent      |
| 1. Are good fabrics and supplies readily available in your community?   | 82.5                         | 8.7      | 8.7           |
| 2. Do you sew because the selection of garments sold in your community is limited?                                      | 30.4                         | 52.3     | 17.4          |
| 3. Would you sew more if your income were less?   | 39.1                         | 47.9     | 13.0          |
| 4. Does the amount of time you can spend on sewing limit your creativity?   | 56.5                         | 21.8     | 21.8          |
| 5. Do the garments you make meet your standards better than those which can be purchased for a similar amount of money? | 69.5                         | 8.7      | 21.8          |

Approximately 83 per cent of the Florida teachers indicated that fabrics and supplies were readily available. Approximately 70 per cent considered the garments they made as meeting their standards better than those purchased for a similar amount of money.

Fifty per cent of the North Carolina teachers and 39 per cent of the Florida teachers would sew more if their incomes were less. A lower income would not affect the sewing habits of 43 per cent of the North Carolina teachers and 48 per cent of the Florida teachers.

The limited selection of garments sold in the communities caused 10 per cent of the North Carolina teachers and 30 per cent of the Florida teachers to sew. Over 70 per cent of the North Carolina teachers and 50 per cent of the Florida teachers indicated that their sewing practices were not affected by a limited selection of garments sold in their communities.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY OF DATA

This study was designed to determine the nature and extent of the use made of sewing skills by a group of highly trained and professional women. Questionnaires were sent to sixty-eight teachers of Home Economics in the white colleges of North Carolina. In order to compare their sewing practices with a similar group in a Southern state with different economic and social structure, questionnaires were also sent to thirty-seven Home Economics teachers in the white colleges of Florida.

Fifty-eight, or 85 per cent, of the North Carolina teachers and 23, or 62 per cent, of the Florida teachers responded to the questionnaire.

#### I. PERSONAL DATA

The majority of the teachers in each group were from urban communities and were employed in schools with an enrollment of over two thousand.

Approximately 45 per cent of the North Carolina teachers and 39 per cent of the Florida teachers were single or widowed and had no dependents. Forty-one per cent of the North Carolina teachers and 35 per cent of the Florida teachers were married.

A larger percentage of the Florida teachers (30 per cent) had children than did the North Carolina teachers (19 per cent). However,

the teachers in North Carolina had more children. The eleven North Carolina teachers in the study had a total of forty-three children and the seven Florida teachers had a total of sixteen children.

Teachers in each group reported "others" as members in their family group. However, no attempt was made to determine the relationship or the degree of dependence of these "other" members of the family group.

## II. PROFESSIONAL DATA

The teachers in each group attended a number of different colleges. More of the Florida teachers indicated attendance at out-of-state colleges than the North Carolina teachers.

Marked differences were noted in the years of teaching experience of the two groups of teachers. Thirty-one per cent of the North Carolina teachers had five years or less experience. The largest number of Florida teachers had 11-15 years of experience.

In both states the largest number of teachers were instructors with 24 per cent of the North Carolina teachers and 22 per cent of the Florida teachers in this rank. There were considerably more full professors in Florida (17 per cent) than in North Carolina (9 per cent).

There was a great difference in the salary ranges of the two states. Fifty-three per cent of the North Carolina teachers earned less than 6,000 dollars. Thirty-nine per cent of the Florida teachers earned over 8,000 dollars.



The largest number of the teachers in both states (35 per cent in each) were teaching Clothing. Other subject matter being taught represented all other areas of home economics.

As preparation for their teaching the majority in both states had majored in Home Economics Education. Next in frequency were those who had majored in Clothing and Textiles. Very few of the teachers in either state had majored in subjects other than Home Economics.

The subject matter in Clothing Construction included in the college preparation of the teachers indicated they had considerable instruction. Nearly all teachers in both groups indicated basic preparation in Elementary Clothing Construction, Advanced Clothing Construction, and Clothing Selection and Care.

The greatest difference noted in the preparation was in the number responding to Draping and Tailoring. More of the North Carolina teachers had Tailoring while more of the Florida teachers had Draping.

The sources of preparation, help or advice other than college preparation indicated most frequently by both groups were (1) instruction by mother and (2) examination of ready-made clothes. A relatively high percentage (21 per cent) of the North Carolina teachers also indicated independent study of books, pamphlets, and other literature, as an aid in developing their skills.

### III. PERSONAL USE OF SEWING SKILLS

The teachers of Home Economics in the colleges of North Carolina

and Florida were questioned in detail on the nature and extent of their use of sewing skills.

Eighty-eight per cent of the teachers in North Carolina and 93 per cent of the teachers in Florida indicated that they did sew. The percentage of this highly professional group of home economists who sewed is quite high compared to the numbers quoted in the national and statewide studies previously cited.

Sewing for adult females. The majority of the teachers who made garments for women made dresses, skirts, and blouses. A smaller but still substantial number made suits and coats. Lingerie was the type of garment less frequently made.

The teachers in North Carolina made a higher percentage of all the items listed for adult females than the teachers in Florida with the exception of only two items of the eleven listed. More teachers in both states (85 per cent in North Carolina and 70 per cent in Florida) listed dresses as the garment most frequently made at home. More of the teachers in North Carolina indicated that they usually made dresses and skirts and occasionally made blouses whereas the teachers in Florida usually made dresses but list all other garments as being made occasionally.

Over 50 per cent of the teachers in North Carolina indicated that they made aprons, suits, and coats. Aprons were usually made by this group. Suits and coats were made occasionally. The Florida teachers ranked these items of apparel in the same order but less than 50 per cent made them.

The only items made by a greater percentage of the Florida teachers than the North Carolina teachers were sportswear and items shown as "other" garments. The difference in the number making sportswear, however, was negligible.

Sewing for children. All of the garments for children were cited by a higher percentage of North Carolina teachers than by those in Florida. This is perhaps a result of the larger families indicated by the teachers in North Carolina. Approximately one-third of the teachers in each state sewed for children.

The teachers in both groups indicated garments for children as being occasionally or never made more frequently than those usually made.

As was the case in sewing done for adult women, dresses were the major item made for children.

Sewing for adult males. About one-third of the teachers in North Carolina did some sewing for men as compared to about one-fifth of the teachers in Florida. The garment most frequently made was shirts. Other garments less frequently made were lounging or sleeping garments and coats.

The items of men's apparel were indicated as garments occasionally made rather than being a part of their usual sewing practice.

Clothing renovation. A greater percentage of the teachers in North Carolina and in Florida indicated they did this kind of sewing more than any other type. The 95 per cent of the North Carolina teachers who reported making clothing alterations is even larger than

the percentage which indicated that they sewed. The same is true for the 93 per cent of the North Carolina teachers who mended clothes.

A greater percentage (87) of the Florida teachers also made alterations. This was also higher than the percentage doing any other type of sewing. In fact, none of the teachers in either group indicated that they "never" made alterations. Three teachers in each state failed to indicate their practice in clothing renovation.

Home furnishings. A study of the frequency of sewing done for the home disclosed that 74 per cent of the North Carolina teachers and 78 per cent of the Florida teachers made curtains. A high percentage of both groups showed that they also made draperies. More people usually made curtains and draperies than any other household item.

The percentages show that most of the other items are largely indicated as being made occasionally. A greater percentage of the Florida teachers made bedspreads than did the North Carolina teachers. The three items mentioned least by both groups of teachers were (1) sheets, (2) pillowcases, and (3) tablecloths.

#### IV. NUMBER OF GARMENTS AND PERCENTAGE OF WARDROBE MADE

As a supplement to the type of sewing done and as a means of determining the amount of sewing done, each individual was asked to give the approximate number of garments made during the past two years. They were also requested to estimate the percentage of their total personal wardrobe represented by the garments made for themselves during this time.



The median number of garments made during this two-year period was fifteen or approximately eight each year by the teachers in North Carolina. The median number of garments made by the teachers in Florida was ten or approximately five garments each year. The actual number of garments made by the North Carolina teachers ranged from 0-125 while the number made by the Florida teachers ranged from 0-35.

The median percentage of the total wardrobe made at home by the North Carolina teachers was 50 per cent as compared to 25 per cent made by the Florida teachers.

#### V. REASONS FOR SEWING

The North Carolina teachers considered the economic value and the possibility of better fitting garments as of more importance to them than enjoyment of sewing or the opportunity for creativity. The Florida teachers considered the enjoyment of sewing and the economic value of greater importance.

The basic reason given by both groups for not sewing was the lack of time.

#### VI. FACTORS INFLUENCING SEWING HABITS

The availability of a good selection of fabrics and supplies influenced the sewing habits of both groups. They continued to sew even though a good selection of garments was also available. About half would sew more if their income were less. The other half would not sew more. The amount of time available for sewing limited the

creativity of both groups. Both groups considered the garments made as meeting their standards better than those which could be purchased for a similar amount of money.

## VII. COMPARISON WITH NATIONAL FIGURES

The percentage of this highly professional group of home economists who sewed (88 per cent of the North Carolina teachers and 93 per cent of the Florida teachers) is quite high compared to some national and statewide studies. In a national study by the United States Department of Agriculture 58 per cent of all women and girls, ages 18-65, did some sewing in 1955.<sup>1</sup> Seventy-eight per cent of the North Carolina Home Demonstration club women questioned did some sewing.<sup>2</sup> Sylvia Porter estimated that "two out of every three females" are sewing.<sup>3</sup>

The national study by the United States Department of Agriculture gave the percentage of women doing the following types of sewing: mending, new clothes, alteration of clothes, household items.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service, Marketing Research Division, Women's Attitudes Toward Wool and Other Fibers, Marketing Research Report No. 153; 1955 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1957), p. 41.

<sup>2</sup>North Carolina Agricultural Extension Office, "Some Results and Interpretations of the Study of Home Demonstration Work in North Carolina" (Raleigh, North Carolina: Agricultural Extension Office, 1958), p. 14. (Mimeographed.)

<sup>3</sup>Sylvia Porter, "Major Industry-Home Sewing is Revived," The Greensboro North Carolina Daily News, September 25, 1958, p. B20.

<sup>4</sup>United States Department of Agriculture, loc. cit.

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This study is unique in that it has controlled the skill factor, whereas the other studies cited have used a random sample. With this factor controlled the reasons given for sewing or for not sewing indicate psychological influences which were not apparent in the other studies. Those who did not enjoy sewing did not sew regardless of the extent of their training or the economic value of sewing to them.

The percentages of teachers in North Carolina and Florida who do these types of sewing are almost double the national percentage in all of the items.

This study is unique in that it has controlled the skill factor, whereas the other studies cited have used a random sample. With this factor controlled the reasons given for sewing or for not sewing indicate psychological influences which were not apparent in the other studies. Those who did not enjoy sewing did not sew regardless of the extent of their training or the economic value of sewing to them.

4. A high percentage of the teachers in both groups did sew.
5. The type of sewing done by both groups is as follows: both groups indicated they most frequently made dresses for the adult female, dresses for children, and skirts for the adult male.
6. The number of garments made was high, but the percentage of their total wardrobe made was higher.
7. More of the North Carolina teachers tended to sew for economy and the Florida teachers for enjoyment.
8. The lack of time was the major reason for not sewing.



## CONCLUSIONS

1. There were differences in the number of teachers employed in the two states.
2. The majority of teachers in each were from urban communities and were teaching in schools with an enrollment of over 2,000.
3. Similarity was noted in the family group of the teachers in the two states.
4. A higher percentage of the Florida teachers held positions of higher professional rank and earned higher salaries than the North Carolina teachers.
5. The majority of the teachers in each group were teaching Clothing and had similar preparation.
6. A high percentage of the teachers in both groups did sew.
7. The type of sewing done by both groups is as follows: both groups indicated they most frequently made dresses for the adult female, dresses for children, and shirts for the adult male.
8. The number of garments made was high, but the percentage of their total wardrobe made was higher.
9. More of the North Carolina teachers tended to sew for economy and the Florida teachers for enjoyment.
10. The lack of time was the major reason for not sewing.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

This study was done with a small selected sample, but it has completely covered the specified area. It is recommended that portions of this study be repeated with much larger samples to obtain more valid information. Suggestions for further study are as follows:

1. Comparing these results with a study of other regions of the United States.
2. Estimating how much is spent on clothes (both on ready-made and on the same garments made at home).
3. Ascertaining suggestions for changes in preparation courses, whether or not more, or less, of certain types of instruction would be desired or needed.

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## APPENDIX A

### SCHOOL OF HOME ECONOMICS WOMAN'S COLLEGE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF SEWING SKILLS TO HOME ECONOMICS TEACHERS AT THE COLLEGE LEVEL

#### PROFESSIONAL STATUS:

Name of college where employed \_\_\_\_\_

Type of community in which located:

Rural \_\_\_\_\_

Small town \_\_\_\_\_

Urban \_\_\_\_\_

College enrollment:

Less than 500 \_\_\_\_\_

500 - 1000 \_\_\_\_\_

1000 - 2500 \_\_\_\_\_

Over 2500 \_\_\_\_\_

Professional title: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX

Check the area or areas of home economics which you are now teaching.

\_\_\_\_\_ Foods \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Nutrition \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Clothing \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Textiles \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Child Development \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Family Relationships \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Housing \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Home Management \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Home Economics Education \_\_\_\_\_

Other occupational or professional responsibilities \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate salary range:

Below \$2000 \_\_\_\_\_

From \$2000 - \$3000 \_\_\_\_\_

\$3000 - \$4000 \_\_\_\_\_

\$4000 and over \_\_\_\_\_

#### COLLEGE PREPARATION:

College attended \_\_\_\_\_

Year of graduation \_\_\_\_\_

Years of teaching experience \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate briefly occupational

experience other than teaching \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX A

SCHOOL OF HOME ECONOMICS  
WOMAN'S COLLEGE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

THE IMPORTANCE OF SEWING SKILLS TO HOME ECONOMICS TEACHERS AT THE  
COLLEGE LEVEL

PROFESSIONAL STATUS:

Name of college where employed \_\_\_\_\_

Type of community in which located:

Rural \_\_\_\_\_  
Small town \_\_\_\_\_  
Urban \_\_\_\_\_

College enrollment:

Less than 500 \_\_\_\_\_  
500 - 1000 \_\_\_\_\_  
1000 - 2000 \_\_\_\_\_  
Over 2000 \_\_\_\_\_

Professional title: \_\_\_\_\_

Check the area or areas of Home Economics which you are now teaching.

|                         |                                |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| _____ Foods             | _____ Family Relationships     |
| _____ Nutrition         | _____ Housing                  |
| _____ Clothing          | _____ Home Management          |
| _____ Textiles          | _____ Home Economics Education |
| _____ Child Development |                                |

Other occupational or professional responsibilities \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate salary range:

|                        |                     |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Below \$3999 _____     | \$6000 - 7999 _____ |
| From 4000 - 5999 _____ | 8000 and over _____ |

COLLEGE PREPARATION:

College attended \_\_\_\_\_ Year of graduation \_\_\_\_\_

Years of teaching experience \_\_\_\_\_ Indicate briefly occupational  
experience other than teaching \_\_\_\_\_



Undergraduate major \_\_\_\_\_  
 Graduate major \_\_\_\_\_

Check the subject matter in which you have had college preparation.  
 Use U for undergraduate preparation and G for graduate preparation.

|  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| _____ Elementary clothing construction | _____ Costume design          |
| _____ Advanced clothing construction   | _____ Advanced costume design |
| _____ Clothing selection and care      | _____ Tailoring               |
| _____ Children's (or family) clothing  | _____ Draping                 |
| _____ Pattern construction             |                               |

List other preparation, help, or advice relating to your sewing skills.  
 (Examples - mother, examining ready-made clothes, etc.)

#### MEMBERS IN IMMEDIATE FAMILY GROUP:

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Self _____    | Number of children _____                      |
| Husband _____ | Number of other persons in family group _____ |

#### PERSONAL USE OF SEWING SKILLS:

Do you sew? \_\_\_\_\_ If answered in the affirmative, please complete the following:

What type of sewing do you do? Indicate by checking the frequency using the following key:

U-Usually                      O-Occasionally                      N-Never

| For Adult Females                | For Children<br>(Infants through 8th Grade) |
|----------------------------------|---|
| _____ Dresses                    | _____ Dresses                               |
| _____ Skirts                     | _____ Skirts                                |
| _____ Blouses                    | _____ Blouses                               |
| _____ Suits                      | _____ Suits                                 |
| _____ Coats                      | _____ Coats                                 |
| _____ Formals                    | _____ Sleeping garments                     |
| _____ Sleeping garments          | _____ Play clothes                          |
| _____ Lingerie                   | _____ Petticoats                            |
| _____ Sportswear                 | _____ Others (please list) _____            |
| _____ Aprons                     |   |
| _____ Others (please list) _____ |   |



Factors For Adult Males your sewing habits. Please check:

☐ Shirts  
☐ Coats  
☐ Lounging or sleeping garments  
☐ Others (please list) \_\_\_\_\_

Clothing renovation:

☐ Alterations      ☐ Making over clothing  
☐ Mending      ☐ Others (please list)  
☐ Patching  
☐ Repairing

Home Furnishings:

☐ Curtains      ☐ Place mats  
☐ Draperies      ☐ Napkins  
☐ Slip covers      ☐ Sheets  
☐ Bedspreads      ☐ Pillow cases  
☐ Pillows      ☐ Others (please list)  
☐ Dish towels  
☐ Table cloths

Approximately how many garments have you made during the past two years? \_\_\_\_\_

On the basis of the total number of garments acquired for your wardrobe in the past two years, estimate the percentage which you have made.

\_\_\_\_\_

Is this typical of your usual sewing habits \_\_\_\_\_  
 If not tell why \_\_\_\_\_

REASONS FOR SEWING: Below are 4 reasons for sewing taken from a national survey. Please number in the order of their importance to you.

☐ Enjoyment of sewing  
☐ Economic value  
☐ Opportunity for creativity  
☐ To get better fitting garment  
 Please list other reasons for your sewing \_\_\_\_\_

Factors which may influence your sewing habits. Please check.

**YES**

NO

\_\_\_\_\_ Are good fabrics and supplies readily available in  
your community?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you sew because the selection of garments sold in  
your community is limited?

Would you sew more if your income were less?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does the amount of time you can spend on sewing limit your creativity?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do the garments you make meet your standards better  
than those which can be purchased for a similar amount  
of money?

**REASONS FOR NOT SEWING:** Please list

# APPENDIX B

## COLLEGES IN WHICH THE TEACHERS QUESTIONED WERE EMPLOYED

| North Carolina   | Questionnaires |          |
|--|----------------|----------|
|  | Sent           | Returned |
| Appalachian State Teachers College . . . . .                         | 5              | 4        |
| Campbell College Junior . . . . .                                    | 1              | 1        |
| Catawba College . . . . .  | 2              | 2        |
| East Carolina College . . . . .                                      | 7              | 6        |
| Elon College . . . . .   | 1              | 0        |
| Flora Macdonald College . . . . .                                    | 2              | 2        |
| Greensboro College . . . . .   | 1              | 1        |
| Guilford College . . . . .   | 1              | 1        |
| High Point College . . . . .   | 2              | 2        |
| Mars Hill College Junior . . . . .                                   | 1              | 1        |
| Meredith College . . . . .   | 2              | 2        |
| Montreat College . . . . .   | 1              | 1        |
| Peace College Junior . . . . .                                       | 1              | 1        |
| Queens College . . . . .   | 2              | 0        |
| Salem College . . . . .  | 2              | 2        |
| Warren Wilson College Junior . . . . .                               | 1              | 1        |
| Western Carolina College . . . . .                                   | 1              | 1        |
| The Woman's College of the University of<br>North Carolina . . . . . | 35             | 30       |
| Total . . . . .  | 68             | 58       |



## APPENDIX B (continued)

| Florida                                | Questionnaires |          |
|--|----------------|----------|
|  | Sent           | Returned |
| Barry College . . . . .                | 1              | 1        |
| Florida Southern College . . . . .     | 3              | 2        |
| The Florida State University . . . . . | 25             | 16       |
| Palm Beach Junior College . . . . .    | 1              | 1        |
| Pensacola Junior College . . . . .     | 1              | 1        |
| University of Miami . . . . .          | 6              | 2        |
| Total . . . . .                        | 37             | 23       |